

Access to online Arabic information resources by the Academics in Ahmadu Bello University Zaria and Bayero University Kano

Hamza Ukashatu Musa¹, NCE, BLIS, MLIS (ABU) CLN,
Department Of Library and Information Science, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria
hmukashatu@abu.edu.ng hamzaukashat@gmail.com

Abstract

Purpose: This study was set out to investigate the Access to Online Arabic Information Resources by Academics in the Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria and Bayero University Kano.

Design/Methodology: In order to achieve this objective, 3 research questions were formulated and two hypotheses were tested at 0.05. A survey method was employed in the conduct of this study. The entire population was used for this study, which was made up of all the academics teaching Arabic and Islamic Studies in ABU Zaria and BUK. A well-structure questionnaire was administered to 126 of Academics in both ABU Zaria and BUK with a total of 79 (62.7%) copies returned. The data collected for the study were presented and analyzed using both descriptive statistics and inferential statistics. Frequency distribution tables, percentages and histograms were also used for the descriptive statistics while One Way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) and T-test were used to test the two hypotheses formulated and determine the areas of differences among the Academics teaching Arabic and Islamic Studies in both Universities.

Findings: It was discovered that, over 60% of the academics teaching Arabic and Islamic Studies in Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria and Bayero University, Kano were not accessing the online Arabic information resources available due to lack of awareness of the availability and lack of information literacy skill(s).

Originality/Value: It was recommended that the university library should take a leading role to create more awareness among Academics on the use of online databases made available to them by conducting training and retraining programmes, organizing workshops, seminars, and conferences so as to increase the level of accessing and utilisation of online Arabic information resources and services

Keywords: Access to online Arabic Information Resources; Utilization of the resources Academics; ABU Zaria: BUK

Introduction

Information is seen as a basic ingredient for personal, social and national development. It's a vital to the overall academic development of university's teaching staff. Thus, it has to be stored and transmitted in both print and electronic devices for access by its customers.

The advancement in Information and Communication Technology (ICT) introduced new dimensions in the generation, acquisition, organization, processing and dissemination of information in virtual environment. The ICTs help information users to search, access and use information regardless of time, distance, location, size and language. The ICTs bring

information at the fingertips of information seekers. Libraries use information technology for better services and satisfy diverse user needs (Kattimani and Kamble, 2007). Libraries have transformed into digital and virtual libraries where physical books, journals and magazines, newspapers, theses and dissertations have changed into e-books, e-journals, e-newspapers, e-magazines e-thesis, e-dissertations etc. Online information resources are easily accessed in remote areas. Online information resources solve storage problems and control the flood of information where print sources are being digitised because of the value of information in the life of human endeavor (Swain and Ray, 2009).

Arabic Information Resources

Arabic Information Resources refer to information sources or resources written in Arabic on various subjects. They are resources that are usually found in Arabic division of the different libraries and information centers. The resources can be in print, non-print and electronic media. They are usually consulted by customers with Arabic language background.

On the other hand, Arabic information resources could be said to consist of documents and other non-book resources in Arabic and English languages provided to satisfy the information needs of users with Arabic language background (Hafez, 2006). Such resources include books of Grammar (Nahwul-wadhihi), Philosophy (Mundhiq) books of Rhetoric (Balagah), Morphology (Sarf) books of literature (Adab), philology (Fiqhul-luggah) Arudiy, Arabic Dictionaries (Qamus) and encyclopedias (Mausuah), Arabic magazines (Mujallah) and newspapers (Jaridah) Book of Sentences analysis (Al'ierab) in print and electronic formats. They may include print journals, magazines, newspapers, print book, Radio and Television broadcasting. The non prints or Internet based formats include. e-journals, e-books, e-theses, e-newspapers,(HTML or Acrobat pdf), streaming videos, podcasting etc. Some of the Internet based resource may be accessed automatically via a University's IP address or using a given password to restrict access. The purpose of the information resources is to provide knowledge, fact, ideas and opinion on variety of subjects to the users.

Access to Online Arabic Information Resource by Academics

Access to online Arabic information resources is concerned with the use of computer network and internet facilities to access the online Arabic information for teaching, learning, and research as well as self and community development. The developments of online information resources has made it easier to access relevant information in different areas especially for teaching, learning and research. The academics in developing countries will need to utilise Internet as a source of information for teaching, learning and research development. (Ojedokun and owolabi 2003) stated that "the Internet resources are an invaluable tool for collaborative research among academic staff" Internet resources provide a way for the

academics in universities to have better access to each other and serve as tool for facilitating teaching, learning and research.

Online information resources have become an integral component of academic library collections worldwide. The resources are regarded as essential for learning, teaching and research activities (Blecic, Kumar and Zhang, 2011). Online information resources provide many advantages over the traditional print resources such as 24x7 access, universal access; saving physical space; ability to linked indexing and abstracting databases; accessibility from the user's home, office, or dormitory irrespective of whether or not the physical library is open; the ability to get usage statistics that are not available for print collection; and their relative ease of maintenance.

Online Arabic information resources are convenient to search and access vast amount of information within the shortest possible time. A good number of online Arabic databases are available on the Internet, which can be accessed free of charge or through university's subscriptions to provide free online databases access to their customers to support academic work/activities especially in the area of teaching, learning and research as well as self and community development.

Utilisation of Online Arabic Information Resource by the Academics

Online information resource utilisation is concerned with the use of variety of information resources for teaching, learning and research activities. Such resources include online books, journals, theses, and dissertations, online newspapers, magazines, indexes/abstract, internet based, online Databases, online encyclopaedia and Dictionaries etc.

Khalid and Hafeez (2010), found that Arabic electronic information resources (online/offline) are used for the purpose of conducting scientific research, teaching and community development etc. Letchumanan(2011), study found that factors such as easy access reduced physical visit to library. The user-friendly features of online resources offer a comfortable platform for participants to use e-books, e-journals, e-magazines, e-newspapers, e-theses, e-dissertations etc. Many academics in universities rely on online information resource as their sources of information because they provide many advantages over the traditional print based

resources. They contain current information because they are updated frequently. They offer advanced search capabilities, and offer flexibility in the storage of results. They enable access and use of information without restriction of time and location.

University library provides access to information resources in various format including online information resources services. This can be through the open access international donors or annual subscription of online Arabic databases such as Maktabu-shamiley, Arab e-Marefa (Ebscohost), ahlaldeeth, Arabic Paryrology databases (Ebscohost and Sage), Index Islamicus database (Sage), Arabica (Arabica, online Encyclopaedia Arabic Literature and Linguistics databases) alislamhouse, ATLA Religion Database, Hinari., etc. to facilitate access to online Arabic information resources among customers through online information resource training as a way of promoting online resources usage.

Statement of the Problem

Academics are those who are actively involved in teaching learning and research activities. They are involved in teaching, researching, administrating and community development. Academics in any society are seen as the propellers of knowledge because they provide an effective learning environment. They need information resources especially online information resources to support and promote their daily activities. Information is stored, shared, accessed and used properly to support education society. Online information resources have brought about a shift in the provision of library services and information by providing wide access to resources from different parts of the world with ease. Online information resources provide many advantages over print resources such as providing 24x7 access, universal access; saving physical space; ability to linked from and indexing and abstracting databases; accessibility from the users home, office, or dormitory irrespective of whether or not the physical library is open; the ability to get usage statistics that are not available for print resources and their relative ease of maintenance. Online information resources have become an integral and substantial component of academic library collections worldwide. The resources are regarded as essential for teaching, learning and research activities as well as self and community development (Blecic, Kumar and nand Zhang

2011). Supporting teaching, research and learning activities traditionally becomes a major mission of academic libraries. University library that is to provide access to online information resources in order to enhance information resources utilisation among its customers. However, preliminary observations revealed that most of the citations of the Academics teaching Arabic and Islamic Studies in writing books, journal articles and conference papers indicate no element of online Arabic citations and no single research was conducted on online Arabic Information Resources. Hence the need of the research on access to online Arabic information resources by the Academics in Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria and Bayero University Kano.

Research Questions

The following are the research question the study seeks to answer.

1. What types of online Arabic information resources available for use of Academics in ABU Zaria and BUK?
2. How do the academics access and utilise the online Arabic information resources available in ABU Zaria and BUK?
3. What are the challenges to access of online Arabic information resources by the academics in Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria and Bayero University, Kano?

Hypotheses

The research sought to answer the following null hypotheses:

Ho1. There is no significant difference between the types of online Arabic information resources available in Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria and Bayero University Kano

Ho2. There is no significant difference between the academics in Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria and Bayero University Kano in the type of online Arabic information resources they access and utilise.

Descriptive Analysis

Under this section, the data collected with respect to the research questions asked in the study were analyzed and discussed as follows

Types of Available Online Arabic Information Resources being Aware by the Academics in Ahmadu Bello University Zaria and Bayero University Kano

The research was aimed at identifying the various types of available online Arabic information resources which the Academics in Ahmadu Bello University Zaria and Bayero University Kano are aware of. In order to

achieve this, a list of online Arabic information resources was outlined for the respondents to tick as many possible in their respective Universities. Below is Table showing the types of online Arabic information resources available.

Types of the available online Arabic information resources being of aware by the Academics in Ahmadu Bello University Zaria and Bayero University Kano

Types of Online Arabic Information Resources	Universities			
	ABU Zaria		BU Kano	
	F	%	F	%
Ahlaldeeth online	13	27.7	0	0.0
AlIslam-L online	12	25.5	13	40.6
Ajurry online	10	21.3	0	0.0
Al-badr online	4	8.5	0	0.0
Arab e-Marafa (Ebscohost)	4	8.5	5	15.6
Arabic Paryrology database (Sage OARE)	3	6.4	4	12.5
Arabwq online	12	25.5	14	43.8
Arabica online	24	51.1	4	12.5
Askzad online	5	10.6	4	12.5
Ashshamly	9	12.8	6	18.8
Ayna.com	5	10.6	0	0.0
Brill online (Journal of Arabic Literature)	29	61.7	6	18.6
EALL Online	17	36.2	5	15.6
Islamay Online	8	17.0	4	12.5
JAIS Online databases (DOAJ)	24	51.1	0	0.0
Online islamhouse	9	19.1	0	0.0
Online Journals of Islamic Studies Religion	14	29.8	0	0.0
Qardawi.com	6	12.8	6	18.8
Saidul.com	8	17.0	2	6.3
Waqfeya online	10	21.3	12	37.5

Table above, it was discovered that Brill Online (Journal of Arabic Literature), JAIS Online Database (DOAJ) and Arabica Online, Waqafeeya, Arabwq online and AlIslam-L online were the types of online Arabic information resources known by Academics with highest frequency of over 50% responses scores by the academics in Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria and Bayero University, Kano respectively, Whereas Al-badr online and Arabwq, Arab e-Marafa (Ebscohost) and The Arabic Paryrology database (Sage OARE) were the types of online Arabic information resources aware with least frequency of less than 6.4% responses scores respectively.

However, a further observation from the table indicated that Online Journals of Islamic Studies Religion, Online Islamhouse, Ajurry online, Al-badr online, Ayna.com, Ahlaldeeth online and JAIS online database (DOAJ) were completely

not known by the Academic in BUK. This perhaps might be connected to the fact that majority of the Academics teaching Arabic and Islamic Studies may not consider online resources as sources of information for their academic activities. It was also observed that over 61% of the respondent in both ABU Zaria and BUK were not aware the available of online Arabic information resources on University Library's websites. This finding is corroborated by that of Kinengyere (2007) who found out that the availability of information does not necessarily mean actual use, because the academician may not be aware of the availability of such resources, they do not know how to access these resources. Similarly Madhusudhan (2008) and Talhami, (2009) found that only 18% of academics at the King Faisal Abdulaziz University Library of JIM agreed to know much about Electronic Arabic database, while about 80% knew little about the resources.

Level of usefulness of Online Arabic information resources by the respondents in ABU and BUK

TYPES OF INFORMATION RESOURCES	UNIVERSITIES											
	ABU Zaria						BU Kano					
	VU		R		NU		VU		R		NU	
F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	
Ahlaldeeth online	7	14.9	4	8.5	36	76.6	0	0.0	0	0.0	32	100
AIslam-L online	5	10.6	5	10.6	37	78.7	11	34.4	3	9.4	18	56.3
Ajury online	2	4.3	1	2.1	44	93.6	0	0.0	0	0.0	32	100
Al-badr online	3	6.4	2	4.3	42	89.4	0	0.0	0	0.0	32	100
Arab e-Marafa	3	6.4	0	0.0	44	93.6	4	12.5	0	0.0	44	93.6
Arabic Paryrology	2	4.2	1	2.1	44	93.6	5	15.7	0	0.0	27	84.4
Arabwq online	4	8.5	7	14.9	36	76.6	10	31.3	3	9.4	19	59.3
Arabica online	16	34.1	6	12.8	25	53.2	3	9.4	2	6.3	27	84.4
Askzad online	1	2.1	4	8.5	42	59.3	2	6.2	2	6.3	28	87.2
Ashshamlay	6	12.7	3	6.4	38	80.8	0	0.0	0	0.0	32	100
Ayna.com	3	8.5	1	2.1	42	89.4	0	0.0	0	0.0	32	100
Brill online (JAL)	19	40.4	4	8.5	24	51.0	5	15.7	1	3.1	26	81.3
EALL Online	13	27.6	5	10.6	29	60.1	3	9.4	2	6.3	27	84.4
Islamay Online	8	17.0	1	2.1	38	80.9	2	6.3	0	0.0	30	83.8
JAIS Online	3	6.4	2	4.3	42	89.4	0	0.0	0	0.0	32	100
Online islamhouse	2	4.3	5	10.0	40	85.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	32	100
Online JAIR	8	17.0	4	8.5	18	56.3	0	0.0	0	0.0	32	100
Qardawi.com	3	6.4	2	4.3	42	89.9	4	12.5	4	12.5	24	75.0
Saidul.com	6	12.7	1	2.1	40	85.1	0	0.0	1	3.1	31	96.9
Waqfeyya	8	17.0	0	0.0	39	83.0	7	21.9	3	9.4	22	68.8

Level of usefulness of Online Arabic information resources by the respondents in ABU and BUK

The table showed the responses of the respondents of the usefulness of online Arabic information resources by the Academics teaching Arabic and Islamic Studies in ABU Zaria. It was discovered that majority of the Academics in both ABU Zaria and BUK indicated that online Arabic information resources outline to them were not useful with the highest frequency of over 60% response scores respectively. It was only at ABU Zaria that Brill online (Journal of Arabic Literature) EALL online, JAIS (Journals of Arabic and Islamic Studies) and Arabica online were found

to be very useful with the highest frequency of over 50% response scores.

However, The above finding from both Universities showed that majority of Academics teaching Arabic and Islamic Studies ABU Zaria and BUK were not using online Arabic information resource due to lack of awareness of the resources and lack of computer literacy skills which is not surprising with A t-test analysis conducted by Ibrahim (2004), to measure use of e-resources and detect factors that deter effective and frequent use. A criterion of less than 0.05 was used to determine the significance of use. Figures show that frequency of use of e-resources was significantly low for most types of e-resources due to lack of awareness.

4.6 Means of Accessing Online Arabic Information Resources by the Academics of ABU and BUK

Means of Accessing Online Arabic Information Resources by the Academics of ABU and BUK	UNIVERSITIES			
	ABU Zaria		BU Kano	
	F	%	F	%
Internet (Cable and Wireless)	42	89.4	0	0.0
GSM Network	18	38.3	25	78.1
Internet Café	11	23.4	17	53.1
Modem	32	68.1	25	78.1
Through library website	10	21.3	0	0.0
Search engines	28	59.6	31	96.9

Table above revealed Internet (Cable and Wires) were the means of accessing online Arabic information resources with highest frequency of 80% responses score by the Academics in ABU Zaria due to availability of internet connectivity in the institution. Whereas internet Café were also another means of accessing online Arabic information resources with the least frequency of less than 23% responses respectively. However at BUK, that GSM Network and personal Modem were the means of accessing online Arabic information resources resource with the highest frequency of Over 70% responses scores

by the Academics due to lack of Internet connectivity in the offices and poor ICT finalities. The study went further to discovered that Over 60% and 90% of the respondents in ABU and BUK access online Arabic information resources through GOOGLE and other search engine instead to search through available online library databases. This finding is supported by earlier finding of Madhusudhan (2007) reveals that most research scholars at Delhi University, used search engines more than subject gateways or Web directories to locate information

Ways by which Academics Access and Used of Online Arabic Information Resources in ABU Zaria and BUK

Means of Access and Used Online Arabic Information Resources Available	Universities			
	ABU Zaria		BU Kano	
	F	%	F	%
By direct reading from Net	46	97.9	32	100
By downloading the information resources	38	80.9	32	100
By mere cut and paste	8	17.0	6	18.8
By saving the document in any storage devices	18	38.3	6	18.8
By printing the content of the document	33	70.2	19	59.4
Downloading forwarded document from an email	6	12.8	10	31.3

The table above revealed that Academics Arabic and Islamic studies at ABU Zaria and BUK access and use online Arabic information resources through direct reading from the net, downloading the information resource and printing the content of the document with the highest frequency of over 70% and 100% responses scores respectively.

saving the document in the storage devises were found to be the least means of access and use of online Arabic information resources with frequency of less than 20% responses scores. However, from the result, it shows that majority of the respondents prepare reading from the net and downloading the information resource then printing the content of the document

On the other hand, the use of cut and paste,

Challenges to Access and Utilisation of Online Arabic Information Resources by the Academic of ABU Zaria and BUK

Challenges faced by the respondents of ABU and BUK in accessing and utilisation of online Arabic information resources.	Universities			
	ABU Zaria		BU Kano	
	F	%	F	%
Not computer literate	33	70.2	24	75.0
Slow Internet connectivity in the institution	46	97.9	31	96.9
Erratic power supply	46	97.9	29	90.6
Poor ICT facilities	39	83.0	32	100
Lack of access to Internet connectivity in the office	37	78.7	30	93.8
Insufficient access to needed journals	32	68.1	31	96.9

From Table Shown that slow Internet connectivity in the institution, Erratic power supply, insufficient computer skill and lack of information literacy skill were the major challenges in accessing and utilisation of online Arabic information resources with highest frequency of over 85% responses scores by the Academics in Ahmadu Bello University Zaria and Bayero University Kano respectively. Whereas, poor ICT facilities and lack of Internet connectivity in the office were the major challenges in accessing and utilisation of online Arabic information resources with highest frequency of 95% and 100% responses scores by the Academics at Bayero University Kano. The prevalence of these challenges was also reported in similar studies such as Abdullahi and Haruna (2008) who found out that lack of basic

knowledge of ICT is the second major constraint after the problem of erratic power supply to the use of electronic resources in the university libraries in Nigeria. The result falls in line with Hafeez (2010) identified various problems the users face while using Arabic electronic resources. Slow internet connectivity, Poor ICTs facilities, lack of access to low cost printers in the library, using advanced search strategy of most databases, and lack of awareness of most of the e resources are significant contributors for the low patronage of customers.

Hypothesis One

Analysis of variance on the types of available online Arabic information resources in Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria and Bayero University Kano

Group Statistics

COLLEGE	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	DF	t-value	P	Decisions
ABU ZARIA	47	4.8085	3.24130	.47279	77	3.307	.001	Significant
BUK KANO	32	2.8125	1.28107	.22646				

Table shows the analysis of variance on the type of available online Arabic information resources in Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria and Bayero University Kano at (P<0.05) level of significance. From the table, the observed T-value of 3.307 is greater than the P critical value of .001 at the same degree of freedom. This implies that the null hypothesis is rejected. It can therefore be concluded that there is a difference between the types of online Arabic information

resources available in Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria and Bayero University Kano

Hypothesis two

Table Analysis of variance between the academics in Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria and Bayero University Kano in the type of online Arabic information resources thy access and utilize.

COLLEGE	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	DF	t-value	P	Decisions
ABU ZARIA	47	4.2766	2.92443	.42657	77	2.745	.008	Significant
BUK KANO	32	2.7813	1.15659	.20446				

Table shows the analysis of variance between the Academics teaching Arabic and Islamic

Studies in Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria and Bayero University Kano in the type of available

online Arabic information resources access and utilised at ($P < 0.05$) level of significance. From the table, the observed T- value of 2.745 is greater than the P critical value of .008 at the same degree of freedom. This implies that the null hypothesis is also rejected. It can therefore be concluded that there is a difference between the academics in Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria and Bayero University Kano in the type of online Arabic information resources they access and utilise. This justify by the t-value of 2.745 as significant at 1% level.

Summary of Major Findings

Based on the data collected and analyzed for this study, the following are the major findings:

1. Out of twenty online Arabic Information resources listed to the Academics in Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria and Bayero University Kano, the study discovered that:
 - a. Brill online (Journal of Arabic Literature) JAIS online database (DOAJ) and Arabica, Al-badr online and Arabwq were the types of online Arabic information resources which the Academics in both ABU Zaria and BU Kano respectively were aware of.
 - b. Brill online (Journal of Arabic Literature) JAIS online database (DOAJ) and Arabica online, Al-badr online and Arabwq online were the types of online Arabic information resources used by the Academics in both ABU Zaria and BUK respectively.
2. On how and where Academics access and use online Arabic information resources available, the study revealed that:
 - a. Over 70% of the respondents indicated GSM Network and personal Modem as the means of accessing online Arabic information resource in BUK due to lack of Internet connectivity in the offices.
 - b. Over 60% and 90% of the respondents in ABU and BUK access online Arabic information resources through GOOGLE and other search engines instead of searching through available online

library databases.

3. On the challenges faced by the Academics in accessing and utilisation of online Arabic information resources listed to them, it was discovered that:
 - a. Slow Internet connectivity in the institution, erratic power supply, insufficient computer and lack of information literacy skills were the major challenges in accessing and utilisation of online Arabic information resources with the highest frequency of over 85% by the Academics in Ahmadu Bello University Zaria and Bayero University Kano respectively.
 - b. Poor ICT facilities and lack of Internet connectivity in the offices were also the major challenges in accessing and utilisation of online Arabic information resources with the highest frequency of 95% and 100% by the Academics at Bayero University Kano.
4. There is no significant difference between the types of online Arabic information resources available in Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria and Bayero University Kano.
5. . There is no significant difference between the academics in Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria and Bayero University Kano in the type of online Arabic information resources they access and use

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of the study, it could be concluded that majority of Academics teaching Arabic and Islamic studies in both Ahmadu Bello University Zaria and Bayero University Kano were not accessing available online Arabic information resources due to lack of awareness of their availability, lack of information literacy skills and problems associate with the resources. Therefore, they need training on how to access and make use of the available online databases in the University libraries' website in order to improve their teaching and research activities. However, there is no doubt that if all Academics would be trained on how to access and use the online Arabic information resources available, there will be high of online access and usage,

higher quality teaching and research activities

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